United Nations A/69/89

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 June 2014

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Item 106 of the preliminary list*
Crime prevention and criminal justice

Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains information on action taken to implement General Assembly resolution 68/185, entitled "Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice". In particular, the report provides a brief overview of the relevant mandates, as well as of the deliberations and action taken at the twenty-third session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on issues pertaining to the preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the outcome of these deliberations.

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V.14-03675 (E) 110614 120614

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 68/185, entitled "Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice", the General Assembly reiterated its invitation to Governments to take into consideration the Salvador Declaration on Comprehensive Strategies for Global Challenges: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Systems and Their Development in a Changing World[1] and the recommendations adopted by the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice when formulating legislation and policy directives and to make all efforts, where appropriate, to implement the principles contained therein, taking into account the economic, social, legal and cultural specificities of their respective States.

2. In the same resolution, the Assembly noted with appreciation the progress made thus far in the preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and decided to hold the Thirteenth Congress in Doha, from 12 to 19 April 2015, with pre-Congress consultations to be held on 11 April 2015. The Assembly also decided that the high-level segment of the Thirteenth Congress would be held during the first two days of the Congress in order to allow Heads of State or Government and Government ministers to focus on the main theme of the Congress and to enhance the possibility of generating useful feedback. The Assembly further decided that, in accordance with its resolution 56/119, the Thirteenth Congress should adopt a single declaration, to be submitted to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for its consideration, and that the declaration should contain recommendations reflecting and emerging from the deliberations of the high-level segment, as well as the discussion of the agenda items and the workshops.

3. In that resolution, the Assembly took note with appreciation of the draft discussion guide prepared by the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, for the regional preparatory meetings and for the Thirteenth Congress, and requested the Secretary-General to finalize the discussion guide in a timely manner, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as additional comments and feedback from Member States, in order to enable the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress to be held as early as possible in 2014.

4. In the same resolution, the Assembly reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to proceed with the organization of the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress and to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in those meetings and in the Congress itself, in accordance with past practice, as well as making a special effort to organize the regional preparatory meeting for European and other States so as to benefit from their inputs.

5. The Assembly urged Governments to actively participate in the regional preparatory meetings, where appropriate, and invited their representatives to

[1] General Assembly resolution 65/230, annex.

examine the substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Thirteenth Congress and to make action-oriented recommendations for consideration by the Congress, and invited Governments to undertake preparations for the Thirteenth Congress at an early stage by all appropriate means, including, where appropriate, the establishment of national preparatory committees.

6. The Assembly also reiterated its invitation to Member States to be represented at the Thirteenth Congress at the highest possible level, for example, by Heads of State or Government, Government ministers or attorneys general, to make statements on the theme and topics of the Congress, and reiterated its invitation to Member States to play an active role in the Thirteenth Congress by sending legal and policy experts, including practitioners with special training and practical experience in crime prevention and criminal justice. Moreover, the Assembly invited donor countries to cooperate with developing countries to ensure their full participation in the workshops, and encouraged States, the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, other entities concerned and the Secretary-General to work together in order to ensure that the workshops are well focused and achieve practical results, leading to technical cooperation ideas, projects and documents for enhancing bilateral and multilateral technical assistance activities in crime prevention and criminal justice. The Assembly once again encouraged the relevant specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as other professional organizations, to cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress.

7. In that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a plan for the documentation for the Thirteenth Congress, in consultation with the extended bureau of the Commission, and to appoint a Secretary-General and an Executive Secretary of the Thirteenth Congress, in accordance with past practice, to perform their functions under the rules of procedure for United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with the necessary resources, from within the overall appropriations of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, to support the preparations for and holding of the Thirteenth Congress; and to ensure, in collaboration with Member States, a wide and effective programme of public information relating to the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress, to the Congress itself and to the follow-up to and implementation of its recommendations.

8. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to accord sufficient time at its twenty-third session to reviewing the progress made in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress, to finalize in a timely manner all outstanding organizational and substantive arrangements and to make its recommendations to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

II. Action taken by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its twenty-third session

9. At the twenty-third session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, delegates welcomed the advanced stage of preparations for the Thirteenth Congress and the successful organization of the regional preparatory meetings and noted that the Congress would take place on the threshold of the United Nations work on the post-2015 development agenda. They also acknowledged that the Congress would provide a unique opportunity to place at centre stage the role of the criminal justice system in promoting the rule of law and in support of sustainable development. Several speakers focused on the forthcoming consultations for the elaboration of a draft declaration in advance of the Congress.

10. The representative of Qatar, which will serve as host to the Thirteenth Congress, made a presentation on the state of progress of preparatory actions for the Congress, which were well advanced, and informed the Commission that Qatar would also host an international meeting of experts in Doha in September 2014, which was expected to discuss elements for the draft declaration to be adopted by the Congress. Reference was also made to the youth forum to be organized by the Qatar Foundation and the Ministry of Interior of Qatar from 7 to 9 April 2015.

11. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice approved the following documentation for the Thirteenth Congress:

(a) *Basic documents*:

(i) Reports of the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress;

(ii) Working papers on each of the substantive items of the provisional agenda for the Thirteenth Congress;[2]

(iii) Working papers on each of the topics of the workshops to be held within the framework of the Thirteenth Congress;[3]

(b) *Background documents*:

(i) Discussion guide on the substantive items of the Thirteenth Congress and workshop topics (A/CONF.222/PM.1);[4]

(ii) National papers and reports submitted by Governments;

(iii) Reports submitted by entities of the United Nations system, including specialized agencies, and by institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, affiliated with the United Nations, including the reports mandated by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its

[2] The provisional agenda for the Thirteenth Congress, finalized by the Commission at its twenty-first session, was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/184.

[3] The issues that will be considered in workshops within the framework of the Thirteenth Congress were decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/184.

[4] After bringing the draft discussion guide to the attention of the Commission at its twenty-second session, the Secretariat, on the basis of the comments received, finalized the guide's content and made it available in the six official languages of the United Nations to the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress.

twenty-third session (the report on the implementation by Member States of the Salvador Declaration and the recommendations adopted by the Twelfth Congress, the report of the Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the report on the state of crime and criminal justice worldwide and the report on the contribution that the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, considering its main theme, could make to the discussions of the post-2015 development agenda);

(iv) Reports submitted by intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and contributions by individual experts on the roster of the Secretariat, dealing with specific questions in their areas of concern.

12. The rules of procedure of the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice were made available to the Commission at its twenty-third session. No proposal was made by the Commission to amend those rules of procedure. Therefore, the Thirteenth Congress will be conducted in accordance with the current rules of procedure, supplemented by the guidelines contained in paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 56/119.

13. At its twenty-third session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice took into consideration the reports of the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress, which were successfully held as follows:

(a) The Asia and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in Bangkok from 22 to 24 January 2014 (see A/CONF.222/RPM.1/1);

(b) The Western Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in Doha from 3 to 5 February 2014 (see A/CONF.222/RPM.2/1);

(c) The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in San José from 19 to 21 February 2014 (see A/CONF.222/RPM.3/1);

(d) The African Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in Addis Ababa from 9 to 11 April 2014 (see A/CONF.222/RPM.4/1).

14. The four regional preparatory meetings agreed on action-oriented recommendations for consideration when preparing the draft declaration to be considered by the Thirteenth Congress. The participants in those meetings highlighted that such recommendations would require concerted action at the subregional, regional and international levels, with a view to strengthening cooperation in criminal justice policymaking. The reports of the four regional preparatory meetings were brought to the attention of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its twenty-third session.

15. In line with past practice followed in previous congresses, the Secretary-General appointed the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as Secretary-General of the Congress and the Director of the Division for Treaty Affairs of the Office as Executive Secretary of the Thirteenth Congress.

16. Also at its twenty-third session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice recommended to the Economic and Social Council the approval of a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly entitled "Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and

preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice".

17. In that draft resolution, the General Assembly would reiterate its invitation to Governments and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to inform the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice about their activities aimed at the implementation of the Salvador Declaration and the recommendations adopted by the Twelfth Congress, with a view to providing guidance on the formulation of legislation, policies and programmes in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice at the national and international levels, and to that end would request the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the subject to be submitted to the Congress for its consideration.

18. The Assembly would also note with appreciation the progress made thus far in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress, would take note with appreciation of the discussion guide prepared by the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, for the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress; and would acknowledge the relevance of the regional preparatory meetings, which have examined the substantive items of the agenda and the workshop topics of the Thirteenth Congress and made action-oriented recommendations to serve as a basis for the draft declaration to be adopted by the Thirteenth Congress.

19. In addition, the Assembly would request the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to begin, in accordance with Assembly resolution 68/185, the preparation of a short and concise draft declaration reflecting the theme of the Congress, at intersessional meetings to be held well in advance of the Thirteenth Congress, taking into account the recommendations of the regional preparatory meetings and consultations with relevant organizations and entities.

20. The General Assembly would emphasize the importance of the workshops to be held during the Thirteenth Congress and would invite Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant entities to provide financial, organizational and technical support to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and to the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network for the preparations for the workshops, including the preparation and circulation of relevant background material.

21. The Assembly would reiterate its invitation to donor countries to cooperate with developing countries to ensure their full participation in the workshops, and would encourage States, other entities concerned and the Secretary-General to work together in order to ensure that the workshops focus on their respective issues and achieve practical results, leading to technical cooperation ideas, projects and documents related to enhancing bilateral and multilateral efforts in technical assistance activities in crime prevention and criminal justice.

22. The General Assembly would also reiterate its request to the Secretary-General to make available the resources necessary to ensure the participation of the least developed countries in the Thirteenth Congress, in accordance with past practice; to facilitate the organization of ancillary meetings of non-governmental and professional organizations participating in the Thirteenth Congress, in accordance with past practice, as well as meetings of professional and geographical interest groups, and to take appropriate measures to encourage the participation of the

academic and research community in the Congress; and to encourage the participation of representatives from relevant entities of the United Nations system in the Thirteenth Congress, bearing in mind the main theme, agenda items and workshop topics of the Congress.

23. Moreover, the General Assembly would encourage Governments to make preparations for the Thirteenth Congress at an early stage by all appropriate means, including, where appropriate, the establishment of national preparatory committees, with a view to contributing to a focused and productive discussion on the topics and to participating actively in the organization and conduct of the workshops, the submission of national position papers on the various substantive items of the agenda and the encouragement of contributions from the academic community and relevant scientific institutions; and would reiterate its invitation to Member States to be represented at the Thirteenth Congress at the highest appropriate level, for example by Heads of State or Government or government ministers and attorneys general, to make statements in the high-level segment on the theme and substantive items of the Congress and to participate actively in its proceedings by sending legal and policy experts with special training and practical experience in crime prevention and criminal justice.

24. In addition, the General Assembly would welcome the plan for the documentation of the Thirteenth Congress, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the extended Bureau of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; would request the Secretary-General to prepare an overview of the state of crime and criminal justice worldwide for presentation at the Thirteenth Congress, in accordance with past practice; and would welcome the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Secretary-General and an Executive Secretary of the Thirteenth Congress, who will perform their functions under the rules of procedure for United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice.

25. Finally, the General Assembly would request the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to give high priority at its twenty-fourth session to considering the declaration of the Thirteenth Congress, with a view to recommending, through the Economic and Social Council, appropriate follow-up by the General Assembly at its seventieth session; and would request the Secretary-General to ensure proper follow-up to its resolution and to report thereon, through the Commission, to the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

26. At its twenty-third session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice also recommended the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of a draft resolution entitled "The Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the post-2015 development agenda".

27. In that resolution, the Economic and Social Council would invite Member States, international organizations and all relevant stakeholders, to provide to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime their views regarding the contribution that the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, considering its main theme, could make to the discussions of the post-2015 development agenda, while respecting the process established by the General Assembly; and would request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to the Thirteenth Congress on that matter.